

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW CAVE-INHABITING
SPIDER, TOGETHER WITH NOTES ON MAMMA-
LIAN REMAINS FROM A RECENTLY DISCOVERED
CAVE IN THE CHUDLEIGH DISTRICT,

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THERIDION TROGLODYTES ♂ & ♀.

Cave-inhabiting Theridion.

Cephalo-thorax horny brown, with a longitudinal central depression; sternum ovate, and of the same colour, margined with a few scattered dark hairs, which become darker towards the mandibles. Caput somewhat prominent. Maxillæ large and stout, dark brown, almost black, with a strong incurved hook. Palpi long dark brown. Abdomen ovately elongate, soft, ashy brown, shading to almost black, at the posterior extremity, clothed with short thickly set hair. Legs slender, very tapering towards the claws, of a reddish horny brown colour, becoming darker towards the tarsus, sparsely covered with short black hairs and spines. In a mutilated specimen the legs were of green tint.

Total length from claw of anterior to claw of posterior
leg:—♂ $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. ♀ $5\frac{7}{8}$ inches.

Length of anterior leg in male... $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Female... $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

 " second " " ... $3\frac{3}{16}$ " " ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ "

 " third " " ... $2\frac{1}{2}$ " " ... $2\frac{1}{8}$ "

 " posterior " " ... 3 " " ... $2\frac{5}{8}$ "

 " of cephalo-thorax ... $\frac{3}{8}$ "

Width " ... $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Length of abdomen $\frac{7}{16}$ inch

Width " $\frac{1}{8}$ "

Length of palpi $\frac{1}{8}$ "

The specimens were obtained from a recently discovered cave in the Chudleigh district on the property of Mr. Peckitt, who most liberally allowed Mr. Frederick Henry, of Launceston, to select, for our examination, specimens, not only of the Arachnidæ but also of the Mammalian remains deposited in the fissures of the rock and embedded in the earthy floor of the cave. Mr. Henry informs us that the Arachnidæ were by no means plentiful (probably owing to the difficulty of distinguishing them, even with the aid of a brilliant light, in the intense darkness of the cave). The male was found on a stalactite, and the female on her globular nest, which hung from the roof, by a comparatively slender thread. The nest, which was about the size of a pigeon's egg, and contained a large number of young, as

well as many unhatched eggs, was formed of a white crystalline web, which scintillated when the light was placed near it, producing a strikingly beautiful effect. The nest was tightly surrounded by the legs of the female. As yet no insects have been found on which the *Theridion troglodytes* must subsist, but no doubt further and more careful examination will lead to the discovery of many. The cave consists of several chambers, in the innermost of which, where the *Arachnidæ* were collected, is a large deposit of Mammalian remains, some of which lie on the projecting shelves of rock, to which they are agglutinated by thick stalactitic incrustation; still larger quantities are found in the crevices of the rock, whilst the earthy and stalagmitic floor yields an abundance of the following species, which have been carefully compared with recent specimens:—

- Halmaturus Bennettii* (brush kangaroo)
- Halmaturus Billardieri* (wallaby)
- Hypsiprymnus Apicalis Potorous Murinus* (kangaroo rat)
- Bettongia Cuniculus* (forester kangaroo rat)
- Phascolomys* (wombat)
- Phalangista Vulpina* (black or grey opossum)
- Phalangista Cookii* (ring-tailed opossum)
- Mus Pachyrus* (recently obtained from Long's Plains)
- Mus Castaneus*.

No traces of Carnivorous Marsupialia have been found, but from the enormous number of bones here collected, and from the broken condition of the larger number, it is more than probable that these caves were the resort of flesh-eating Mammals. As the floor of the Bone Cave is about 30ft. below the level of the present entrance, and is only reached by two well-like descents of from 14ft. to 16ft. each, connected by low passages, it is almost certain that an entrance must have existed on the other side of the range. The bones, though not fossilized, for the most part bear evidence of considerable age. In a future paper we hope, after careful examination of the cave, to give fuller particulars of this most interesting discovery, as well as a larger list of the contained organisms. We are informed that the stalactites are truly magnificent, surpassing in beauty those of the well known and justly famed Chudleigh caves.
